

Human Impact Monitoring and Re-vegetation Efforts along the Littoral Zone of Ross Lake, Washington

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Abstract

Native communities along the Skagit River have been impacted by human actions. Development of three consecutive dams has converted the Skagit into a lake-like habitat. Establishment of Ross Dam, Diablo Dam, and George Dam have inundated a portion of the Skagit River valley, which has displaced and, in some cases, decimated biotic populations that once thrived along the river. Currently, Seattle citizens use this hydroelectric power at the riparian community's expense. Understanding the magnitude of human impact on this riparian area can lead to an awareness that will reduce man's impact and exploitation of this land.

Increased visitor use of the Ross Lake Recreational Area is compounding this alteration of the Skagit landscape. Ross Lake Multitask team has identified losses of native vegetation cover, incursions of non-native vegetation and the need for plant community restoration work around campgrounds on Ross Lake. The Multitask team has enabled visitors to have hands-on opportunities in contributing to the restoration work. The Multitask team has also coordinated with Seattle City Light by utilizing woody debris in restoration sites that is otherwise disposed of, transforming a waste into a biological resource. Restoration success relies on visitor and land managers understanding of their biomanipulation within this region.